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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 KINSHASA 000808

SENSITIVE

SIPDIS

Dept for AF/C, INL, S/SAI (Ross), S/P, PM, DRL/AE, EEB/ESC/IEC
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SUBJECT: ADVANCING THE SECRETARY'S INITIATIVE FOR DRC VIA US
TECHNICAL EXPERTS TEAMS

REF: KINSHASA 787

¶11. (SBU) The Secretary's August 10/11 visit to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) resulted in several new areas for cooperation and assistance. Building on the Secretary's offer to President Kabila of U.S. technical assistance and expertise, post has launched a strategy for the five themes discussed during the visit for this new assistance. These five themes include: addressing corruption, promoting good economic governance, supporting Security Sector Reform (focused on reform of the police and military), combating sexual and gender-based violence, and enhancing food security.

¶12. (SBU) The first step in the process of defining specific new mechanisms and initiatives will be the visit of teams of US technical experts in each of these five themes. The objective of these teams will be to define, in coordination with the GDRC, specific new initiatives and mechanisms to assist the DRC to address its continuing development challenges. To maintain the current positive momentum from the Secretary's visit, we request that each of these teams visit the DRC no later than the end of October. Key for the successful implementation of the Secretary's initiative for DRC will be the swift identification of resources for this new commitment. Specific information on post's strategy is provided below.

U.S. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND EXPERTISE: THEMES

¶13. (SBU) The Secretary's visit provided an opportunity to build on our robust USG assistance programs in the DRC by developing a new cooperative relationship with the GDRC in key areas. The themes identified by the Secretary during her discussions with President Kabila and Prime Minister Muzito reflect key challenges facing the GDRC. Post's strategy is to move quickly on the Secretary's commitment to provide USG technical assistance and expertise in each area.

a) Addressing Corruption. Pervasive corruption stands as perhaps the greatest challenge to the DRC's social, economic and political development. President Kabila identified anti-corruption assistance as his priority under the Secretary's initiative. New anti-corruption efforts under the Secretary's initiative could include identifying and defining specific mechanisms to combat corruption within two key areas: the Congolese military (FARDC) and the Congolese civil service. Post has already identified an internationally-recognized anti-corruption expert (reftel) to visit the DRC in September to launch the discussions. This visit will be followed by a US team of experts.

b) Promoting Good Economic Governance. The Congolese people have yet to benefit from the DRC's vast resource wealth. The US technical experts team working under the Economic Governance theme would focus on three distinct issues: 1) improving the DRC's investment climate (including through more transparent and efficient tax administration, reduction of bureaucracy for business registration, and enhanced contract enforcement); 2) better management of the DRC's mineral wealth (including stemming the illegal minerals trade in eastern DRC and improving fiscal management of the minerals trade throughout the country); 3) improving fiscal transparency and public financial management.

c) Security Sector Reform (Police and Military). Security Sector Reform (SSR) remains essential to ending impunity for human rights violations by the military and police, including sexual and gender based violence (SGBV), and supporting long-term stability in the DRC. Under the Secretary's initiative, technical expertise in this area would focus on defining specific initiatives and mechanisms to sensitize Congolese police and military on combating SGBV with the aim of directly reducing violations. US expertise could also be used to address issues such as ensuring payment of salaries as a means of reducing human rights violations by the police and military. Enhancing the capacity of military justice will be addressed through established programs, not/not under the Secretary's initiative.

d) Combating Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV). Ending SGBV was a major focus of the Secretary's visit and continues to be a priority for post. Post welcomes the visit of Senior Advisor Alec Ross to explore specific new mechanisms as part of broader USG initiatives in this area.

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e) Enhancing Food Security. The DRC remains highly food insecure, despite enormous and untapped agricultural production potential. Mechanisms and initiatives in this area would build on the USG's broader goals and objectives of promoting global food security.

US EXPERTISE TO SUPPORT THE SECRETARY'S INITIATIVE

14. (SBU) Post envisions teams comprised of four experts in each area. We request that each of these teams visit the DRC during September or October. Each team would include a senior-level USG team leader. We anticipate the teams to include USG experts, from a broad range of agencies and departments (at a minimum State and USAID), accompanied by one member from the private sector, civil society or academia. As noted above, the objective of these teams will be to work with the GDRC to identify specific mechanisms and define new initiatives in under each of the five areas. The teams will take into account existing initiatives by the USG and other donors. These visits will serve as the basis for the development and launching of new programming.

RESOURCES

15. (SBU) The Secretary's initiative reflects new mechanisms and areas for US-DRC cooperation. As such, the success in responding quickly to the Secretary's offer of US technical expertise and assistance will require new resources. We encourage all relevant Department of State and other USG offices to assist in the prompt identification and allocation of sufficient new resources to ensure we can respond to the Secretary's commitment to provide assistance.

GARVELINK